HIS MAJESTIES DECLARATION

To all His loving Subjects upon occasion of the late *Ordinance* and *Declaration* of the

Lords and Commons

For the Assessing all such who have not contributed sufficiently for raising of Money, Plate, &c.

Charles R.

OUr expresse pleasure is, That this Our Declaration be published in all Churches and Chapels within the Kingdom of *England* and Dominion of *Wales*, by the Parsons, Vicars or Curates of the same.

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HIS MAJESTIES

DECLARATION

To all His loving Subjects upon occasion of the late Ordinance and Declaration for Assessments.

IT would not be believed (at least great pains have been taken that it might not) that the pretended Ordinance of the *Militia* (the first attempt that ever was to make a Law by Ordinance without Our consent) or the keeping Us out of *Hull*, and taking Our Arms and Munition from Us, could any way concern the Interest, Property, or Liberty of the Subject, and it was confessed by that desperate Declaration it self of the 26. of *May*, That if they were found guilty of that charge of destroying the title and interest of Our Subjects to their Lands and Goods, it were indeed a very great Crime. But it was a strange fatall Lethargy which had seized Our good People, and kept them from discerning, that the Nobility, Gentry, Commonalty of *England*, were not only stripped of their preheminences and priviledges, but of their Liberties and Estates, when Our just Rights were denyed Us, and that no Subject could from thenceforth expect to dwell at home, when We were driven from Our Houses and Our Towns. It was not possible, that a Commission could be granted to the Earl of *Essex*, to raise an Army against Us, and for the safety of Our Person, and preservation of the peace of the Kingdom, to pursue, kill and slay Us and all who wish well to Us, but that in a short time inferiour Commanders, by the same Authority, would require Our good Subjects for the maintenance of the property of the Subject, to supply them with such summes of Money as they think fit, upon the penalty of being plundred with all extremity of Warre (as the stile of Sir *Edward Bayntons* Warrant runnes against Our poor

Subjects

Subjects in *Wiltshire*) and by such Rules of unlimited Arbitrary Power, as are inconsistent with the least pretence or shadow of that Property it would seem to defend.

If there could be yet any understanding so unskilfull and Supine to believe, That these Disturbers of the publike peace do intend any thing but a generall confusion, they have brought them a sad Argument to their own doors to convince them; after this Ordinance and Declaration, 'tis not in any sober mans power to believe himself worth any thing, or that there is such a thing as Law, Liberty, Property left in *England*, under the Jurisdiction of these men, and the same power that robs them now of the Twentieth part of their Estates, hath by that but made a claim and entitled it self to the other Nineteen, when it shall be thought fit to hasten the generall ruine. Sure, if the mindes of all men be not stubbornly prepared for servitude, they will look on this Ordinance as the greatest Prodigy of Arbitrary Power and Tyranny, that any Age hath brought forth in any Kingdom, other Grievances (and the greatest) have been conceived intollerable, rather by the Logique and Consequence, then by the Pressure it self, this at once sweeps away all, that the Wisdome and Justice of Parliaments have provided for them. Is their Property in their Estates (so carefully looked to by their Ancestors, and so amply established by Us against any possibility of Invasion from the Crown) which makes the meanest Subject as much a Lord of his own as the greatest Peer, to be valued or considered? Here is a Twentieth part of every mans Estate (or so much more as four men will please to call the Twentieth part) taken away at once, and yet a Power left to take a Twentieth still of that which remains, and this to be leavied by such circumstances of severity, as no Act of Parliament ever consented to. Is their liberty which distinguishes Subjects from Slaves, and in which this free-born Nation hath the Advantage of all Christendom, dear to them? They shall not only be imprisoned in such places of this Kingdom, (a latitude of Judgement no Court can challenge to it self in any Cases) but for so long time as the Committee of the House of Commons for examination shall appoint and order; the House of Commons it self having never assumed, or in the least degree pretended to a power of Judicature, having no more Authority to administer an Oath (the only way to discover and finde out the truth of facts) to, then to cut off the heads of any of Our Subjects; and this Committee being so

farre from being a part of the Parliament, that it is destructive to the whole, by usurping to it self all the power of the King, Lords, and Commons. All who know any thing of Parliaments know that a Committee of either House ought not by the Law to publish their own Results, neither are their conclusions of any force without the Confirmation of the House, which hath the same power of controling them, as if the matter had never been debated; but that any Committee should be so contracted (as this of Examination, a style no Committee ever bore before this Parliament) as to exclude the Members of the House, who are equally trusted by their Countrey, from being present at the Councells, is so monstrous to the priviledges of Parliament, that it is no more in the power of any man to give up that freedom, then of himself to order, that from that time the place for which he serves, shall never more send a Knight or Burgesse to the Parliament, and in truth is no lesse then to alter the whole frame of Government, to pull up Parliaments by the Roote, and to commit the Lives, Liberties, and Estates of all the People of *England*, to the Arbitrary power of a few unqualified Persons, who shall dispose thereof according to their discretion, without account to any Rule or authority whatsoever.

Are their friends, their wives, and children (the greatest blessings of Peace and the comforts of Life) pretious to them? would even their penury and imprisonment be lesse grievous by those cordialls? they shall be devorced from them, banished, and shall no longer remain within the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, (the Suburbs and the Counties adjacent, and how farre those adjacent Counties shall extend no man knows.

Is there any thing now left to enjoy, but the Liberty to Rebell, and destroy one another? are the outward blessings only of Peace, Property, and Liberty, taken, and forced from Our Subjects? are their Consciences free and unassaulted by the violence of these firebrands? sure the Liberty and freedom of Conscience cannot suffer by these men? Alas! all these punishments are imposed upon them because they will not submit to Actions contrary to their naturall Loyalty, to their Oathes of Allegiance and Supremacy, and to their late, voluntary Protestation, which obliges them to the care of Our Person and Our just Rights. How many Persons of Honour, Quality, and Reputation of the severall Counties of *England*, are now imprisoned, without any objection against them, but suspition of their Loyalty? how many of

the graveſt and moſt ſubſtantiall Citizens of *London*, by whom the Government and Diſcipline of that City was preſerved, are diſgraced, robbed, and impriſoned, without any Proceſſe of Law, or colour of accuſation, but of obedience to the Law and Government of the Kingdom? whilſt Anabaptiſts and Browniſts with the aſſiſtance of vitious and debeſhed perſons of deſperate Fortune, take upon them to break up and rifle houſes, as publike and avowed Miniſters of a new invented Authority; How many godly, pious, and painfull Diviner, whoſe lives and learning hath made them of reverend Eſtimation, are now ſlandered with inclination to Popery, diſcountenanced, and impriſoned, for diſcharging their Conſciences in inſtructing the people in the Chriſtian duty of Religion and Obedience, whilſt Schiſmaticall, Illiterate, and ſcandalous Preachers, fill the Pulpits and Churches, with Blaſphemy, Irreverence, and Treaſon, and incite their Auditory to nothing but Murther and Rebellion; We paſſe over the vulgar charm, by which they have captivated ſuch who have been contented to diſpence with their conſciences for the preſervation of their Eſtates, and by which they perſwade men cheerfully to part with this twentieth part of their Eſtate to the good work in hand, for whoever will give what he hath, may ſcape robbing; *They ſhall be repaid upon the publike Faith, as all other monyes lent upon the Propoſitions of both Houſes*; it may be ſo, but men muſt be condemned to a ſtrange unthriftineſſe who will lend upon ſuch ſecurity. The publike Faith indeed is as great an earneſt as the State can give, and engages the Honour, Reputation and Honeſty of the Nation, and is the Act of the Kingdom, 'tis the ſecurity of the King, the Lords and Commons, which can never need an Executor, can never dye, never be Bankrupt, and therefore We willingly conſented to it for the Indemnity of Our good Subjects of *Scotland*, (who We hope will not think the worſe of it, for being ſo often and ſo cheaply mentioned ſince.) But that a Vote of one or both Houſes ſhould be an engagement upon the publike Faith, is as impoſſible, as that the Committee of the Houſe of Commons for Examinations, ſhould be the High Court of Parliament.

And what is or can be ſaid with the leaſt ſhadow of reaſon to juſtifie theſe Extravagances? We have not lately heard of the old fundamentall Laws which uſed to warrant the Innovations, this needs a Refuge even below thoſe foundations: They will ſay, they cannot manage their great undertakings without ſuch extraordinary wayes; We think ſo

ted, but that proves only they have undertaken somewhat they ought not to undertake, not that it is lawfull for them to do any thing that is convenient for those ends: We remembred them long ago, and We cannot do it too often, of that excellent Speech of Mr *Pyms*. *The Law is that which puts a difference betwixt good and evill, betwixt just and unjust, if you take away the Law, all things will fall into a confusion, every man will become a Law unto himself, which in the depraved condition of humane nature, must needs produce many great Enormities, Lust will become a Law, and Envy will become a Law, Covetousnesse and Ambition will become Lawes, and what Dictates, what Decisions such Laws will produce may easily be discerned.* It may indeed by the sad instances over the whole Kingdom; But will Posterity beleeve, that in the same Parliament this Doctrine was avowed with that Acclamation, and these instances after produced; That in the same Parliament such care was taken that no man should be committed in what case soever, without the cause of his Imprisonment expressed, and that all men should be immediatly bayled in all Cases bayleable, and during the same Parliament that Alderman *Pennington*, or indeed any body else, but the sworn Ministers of Justice, should imprison whom they would; and for what they would, and for as long time as they would; That the King should be reproached with breach of Priviledge for accusing Sir *John Hotham* of high Treason, when with force of Arms he kept Him out of *Hull*, and despised Him to His face, because in no case a Member of either House might be committed or accused without leave of that House, of which he is a Member, and yet that during the same Parliament, the same Alderman should commit the *Earl* of *Middlesex* (a Peer of the Realm) and the Lord *Buckhurst* (a Member of the House of Commons) to the Counter without reprehension, that to be a Traytor (which is defined, and every man understands) should be no crime, and to be called Malignant (which no body knows the meaning of) should be ground enough for close imprisonment; That a Law should be made, that whosoever should presume to take Tunnage and Poundage without an Act of Parliament, should incurre the penalty of a Premunire, and the same Parliament, that the same imposition should be laid upon Our Subjects, and taken by an Order of both Houses, without and against Our Consent. Lastly, That the same Parliament, a Law should be made to declare the proceedings and judgement upon Ship-Money to be illegall and voyd, and during

that Parliament, that an Order of both Houses shall, upon pretence of necessity, enable four men to take away the twentieth part of their Estates from all their Neighbours, according to their discretion.

But Our good Subjects will no longer look upon these and the like Results, as upon the Counsels and conclusions of both Our Houses of Parliament; (though all the world knows even that Authority can never justifie things unwarrantable by the Law) they well know how few of the Persons trusted by them are present at their consultations, of above 500 not 80, and of the House of Peers, not a fifth part, that they who are present enjoy not the Priviledge and Freedom of Parliament, but are besieged by an Army, and awed by the same Tumults, which drave Us and their fellow Members from thence, to consent to what some few seditious, Schismaticall Persons amongst them do propose; These are the men, who joyning with the Anabaptists and Brownists of *London*, first changed the Government and Discipline of that City, and now by the pride and power of that City would undo the Kingdom, whilest their Lord Mayor (a Person accused and known to be guilty of high Treason) by a new Legislative Power of his own, suppresses and revile the Book of Common-Prayer, robs, and imprisons whom he thinks fit, and with the rabble of his Faction gives Laws to both Houses of Parliament, and tells them they will have no Accomodation, whilest the Members sent and entrusted by their Countries, are expelled the House, or committed for refusing to take the oath of Association, to live and dye with the Earl of *Essex*, as very lately Sir *Sidney Montague*. These are the men who have presumed to send Ambassadors, and to enter into Treaties with Forraign States in their own behalfs, having at this time an Agent of their own with the States of *Holland*, to negotiate for them upon private instructions. These are the men, who not thinking they have yet brought mischief enough upon this Kingdom, at this time invite and sollicite Our Subjects of *Scotland* to enter this Land with an Army against Us. In a word, These are the men who have made this last devouring Ordinance to take away all Law, Liberty, and Property from Our people, and have by it really acted that upon Our people, which with infinite malice, and no colour or ground, was laboured to be infused into them to have been Our Intention by the Commissions of *Array*.

We have done; What Power and Authority these men have, or will have, We know not, for Our Self We challenge none such; We look

look upon the Pressures and Inconveniences Our good Subjects bear, even by Us and Our Army, (which the Army first raised by them enforced Us to levy in Our defence, and their refusall of all offers and desires of Treaty enforceth Us to keep) with very much sadnesse of heart; We are so farre from requiring a twentieth part of their Estates (though for their own visible preservation) that as We have already sold or pawned Our own Jewels, and coyned Our own Plate; so We are willing to sell all Our own Land, and Houses for their relief; yet We do not doubt but Our good Subjects will seriously consider Our Condition and their own Duties, and think Our readinesse to protect them with the utmost hazard of Our Life, deserves their readinesse to assist Us with some part of their Fortunes; and whilst other men give a twentieth part of their Estates, to enable them to forfeit the other nineteen, that they will extend themselves to Us in a liberall and free proportion for the preservation of the rest, and for the maintenance of Gods true Religion, the Laws of the Land, the Liberty of the Subject, and the safety and very being of Parliaments, and this Kingdom: for if all these ever were, or can be in manifest danger, tis now in this present Rebellion against Us.

Lastly, We will and require all Our loving Subjects of what degree or quality soever, as they will answer it to God, to Us, and to posterity, by their Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, as they would not be looked upon now, and remembred hereafter, as betrayers of the Laws and Liberty they were born to, that they in no degree submit to this wilde pretended Ordinance, and that they presume not to give any encouragement or assistance to the Army now in Rebellion against Us, which if not withstanding they shall do, they must expect from Us the severest punishment the Law can inflict, and a perpetuall Infamy with all good men.

FINIS.